



COL. KATHIE CLOSE
377th Air Base Wing commander

Driving, cell phone present flightline hazard

I know you have addressed the driving and cell phone use issue previously. I also know the basic answer to the last message was that if the phone call was more important than what you are doing, such as driving, then it is okay to talk on your cell phone.

My problem is that no one is using their common sense when they are driving and using their cell phones at the same time. I work on the flightline and a cop came flying around a building, talking on a cell phone, past two running helicopters that are valued at \$42 million each, and a bunch of maintenance people running back and forth between the aircraft and the hangar trying to fix the aircraft.

I would think that better judgment could be shown. But, the fact remains that on any given day you can see all levels of people driving

FORUM

kirtlandcc.forum@kirtland.af.mil, 846-4240

around this base, talking on cell phones. I have a real hard time believing that their conversations are more important than my Airmen or my aircraft.

I think we need to rethink this policy and step forward and eliminate cell phone use while driving.

While the use of cell phones when driving on Kirtland AFB is not prohibited, security forces are not allowed to use personal cell phones on duty. Your concerns about flightline safety is one of the main reasons the 377th Security Forces Squadron leadership used when deciding not to allow their unit members to use personal cell phones on duty.

Unfortunately, you were not specific enough for us to identify and correct the actions of the member involved.

Security forces will remind their members of their rules for cellular phone use. They will also inform the flightline units of the need to be more specific and timely when they report a security forces member committing an unauthorized act.

Larger, open-to-everyone lockers coming to East Fitness Center

Why isn't the East Fitness Center assigning lockers anymore? I'm retired military and I put my name on a waiting list over two years ago. There are a lot of lockers available, many of them with "Daily Use Only" on them.

Since the weather is getting warmer, I plan on starting to ride my bicycle again. It would be a lot more convenient to not have to strap my gym clothes on the back of my bike on a daily basis.

We have stopped issuing permanent lockers to patrons because we're buying new lockers. Based on patron feedback, we're going to buy larger lockers to better fit uniforms and clothing. Of course, by having larger lockers it's going to cut the total number available. By establishing all lockers "daily use only" we will easily accommodate our community with the better of two worlds (larger lockers and the ability to use a locker anywhere in the locker room).

Sensible suggestion changes policy

Why do we need to get a day pass for a vehicle (rentals or a new vehicle that has not been registered yet) if we are already doing 100 percent identification checks at the gates? This is the only base I've been to that your military identification card is not good enough to get you through the gate.

The gate guard said it was for the increased Force Protection Condition. I don't see how this improves base security when all they are doing is checking registration and insurance.

We concur wholeheartedly with your recommendation. Security Forces are coordinating a change to the Kirtland AFB supplement to Air Force Instruction 31-204, Motor

Vehicle Traffic Supervision. This will allow access to the installation by anyone with credentials permitting unescorted access without requiring temporary vehicle registration. Members on temporary duty or who are temporarily driving a rental or loaner vehicle will not be required to obtain a pass or decal.

Personnel who are required to permanently register their vehicles on base will still be required to get a Registered Vehicle Decal. We expect this supplement to be approved within a few weeks. Thanks for your recommendation.

Contacting Forum

We want your suggestions and comments concerning Kirtland AFB. Give base agencies or the chain of command the chance to resolve your concern before calling Forum. Callers' names won't be printed.

Write:
377th ABW/CC Forum
2000 Wyoming SE
Kirtland AFB NM 87117.

Customer service

Chapel, 846-5691
CE 24-hour Help Desk, 846-8222
Commissary, 846-9586
Computer help, 846-5926
Energy wasting, 846-4633
Exchange Service, 266-9887
Family Services, 846-0741
Finance, 846-8045, 846-6639
Law Enforcement Desk, 846-7926, 846-7913
Legal Services, 846-4217
Medical Clinic, 846-3406
Services Squadron, 853-7679

Air Force mourns lost of Belen-native pilot

The war on terrorism came home to the small community of Belen, N.M., when a loved daughter was killed in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan March 23.

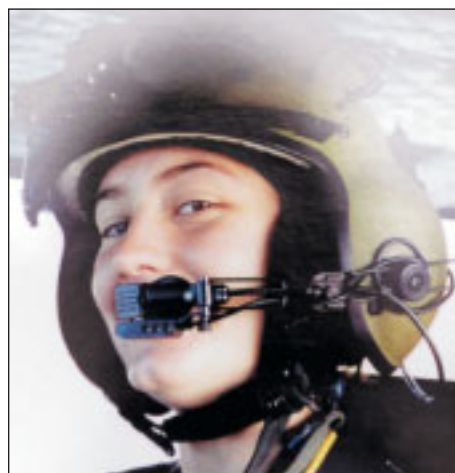
The 23-year-old copilot, 1st. Lt. Tamara Long Archuleta, was killed during a mission to help Afghan children needing medical care for head injuries.

Among the family and friends the Airman leaves behind are her parents, Richard and Cindy Long of Belen, her three-year-old son, a fiancé, an Air Force pilot who she'd planned to marry in a couple of weeks, and her brother Michael Long.

Air Force officials have said the helicopter was in an area with thunderstorms and, at this time, the crash is not believed to be caused by enemy action.

Also killed in the crash of the Moody AFB, Ga., helicopter were pilot Lt. Col. John Stein, flight engineer Staff Sgt. John Teal, gunner Staff Sgt. Jason Hicks, pararescueman Master Sgt. Michael Maltz, and pararescueman Senior Airman Jason Plite.

Archuleta began her military ca-



1st. Lt. Tamara Long Archuleta

reer in the Air Force ROTC at the University of New Mexico, where she graduated with honors in 1999. She was selected for promotion to captain.

Archuleta had earned 12 combat hours and eight combat support hours during her military career. Her first assignment after basic training was Moody AFB.

Although she originally hoped to

become a fighter pilot, she fell in love with rescue work. She served in the 41st Rescue Squadron and was deployed to Afghanistan this year.

The home-schooled Archuleta also earned an associate's degree at UNM-Valencia Campus and was valedictorian of her class.

The family of the Airman with an "unflappable spirit" joined the military community, following in the footsteps of her Navy pilot grandfather and her uncle who was a pararescueman.

Archuleta believed being a woman was irrelevant to her ability to serve her country and to join other Airmen serving "above and beyond."

In an interview with a local newspaper in 2001, Archuleta told of growing up listening to her grandfather's stories about the military and the honor and nobility of serving her country.

Being a "girl," Archuleta's mother has said, was no deterrent to Archuleta's aim to live fully or to serve in the military.

Rio Rancho feels sting of war against terrorism

Also lost in the March 23 crash of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter in Afghanistan was Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Hicks, 25, whose wife is from Rio Rancho.

The aerial gunner who trained at Kirtland AFB married Cristy Nollen Jan. 27 in Georgia and planned a second wedding in May in South Carolina.

They were scheduled to move to Okinawa for a three-year tour at the completion of his assignment with the 41st Rescue Squadron supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.



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OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Janice Cannon

B-2 Spirit bombers

B-2 Spirit bombers take off from a forward-deployed location March 21 to fly to an Operation Iraqi Freedom mission.

Officials urge against unsolicited troop mail

WASHINGTON (AFPN)—To bolster force protection, the general public is urged not to send unsolicited mail, care packages or donations to forward-deployed service members unless they are a family member, loved one or personal friend, said DOD officials.

On Oct. 30, DOD suspended the “Operation Dear Abby” and “Any Servicemember” mail programs because of force protection concerns. Although these programs provide support to friends and loved ones stationed overseas, they also provide an avenue to introduce hazardous substances or materials into the mail system from unknown sources.

Unsolicited mail, packages and donations from organizations and individuals also compete for limited airlift space used to transport supplies, warfighting materiel and mail from family and loved ones.

Recently, DOD officials became aware of organizations and individuals who continue to support some form of the “Any Servicemember” program by using the names and addresses of individual servicemembers and unit addresses.

These programs are usually supported by well-intentioned, thoughtful and patriotic groups who are simply unaware of the new risks facing deployed

Postal service adds dedicated mail freighter to Kuwait

The U.S. Postal Service has chartered a 747 freighter on behalf of the military, from Newark, N.J. to Kuwait.

The freighter started service March 9. It currently leaves three times weekly and has only a stop for fuel in Europe.

It takes 18 hours from New Jersey to Kuwait. It stays on the ground long enough to unload mail and load return outbound mail. Although not on a seven day a week schedule, their reliability will overcome the many problems experienced recently.

military forces, said officials. Some individuals and groups publicize the names and addresses of service-members, ships or units on Web sites. The result is a potential danger to the troops they wish to support.

DOD officials cannot support creative and well-intentioned efforts that defeat force protection measures, but can instead recommend alternatives to mail and donation programs. To show support to

troops overseas, the following are recommended:
★ Log on to the following Web sites to show support, to include greeting cards, virtual “thank you” cards and calling card donations to help troops stay in contact with loved ones:

www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html
www.usocares.org/home.htm
www.army.mil/operations/iraq/faq.html

- ★ Visit Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and nursing homes.
- ★ Volunteer services to honor veterans who served in past conflicts.
- ★ Mail from family members and loved ones has always been encouraged and the military mail system will continue to work hard to get that mail

to service members overseas, said officials.

Donations may be made to the following agencies to directly help the families and members of the respective military branches.

Air Force Aid Society
1745 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Suite 202
Arlington, VA 22202
703-607-3064
www.afas.org

Army Emergency Relief
200 Stoval Street
Alexandria, VA 22332
703-428-0000
www.aerhq.org

Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society
4015 Wilson Blvd, 10th floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1952
703-696-4904
www.nmcrs.org

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Board of Control
2100 Second Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20593-0001
202-267-1566
www.cgmahq.org

Kirtland AFB Family Support Center-Hearts Apart Program:

Friends of Family Support-Hearts Apart Program
1451 4th Street S.E. Bldg 20245 Rm 126
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117
505-846-0741

IRS has tax paying options for deploying military

MAJ. MARK H. ALEXANDER

377th Air Base Wing
Staff Judge Advocate Office

The April 15 tax filing deadline is fast approaching, but for those who are deploying to a Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area, this may be the last thing on their “things to do” list.

For these folks, there are few different options that should be considered, depending on the circumstances.

An otherwise well-prepared member may have sufficient time to gather the necessary financial documents and file an accurate return before deploying. Kirtland’s VITA Tax Center is a great resource for this.

You could also authorize a spouse or other trusted individual to file the return for you. The IRS accepts two means of authorization: a power of attorney specifically authorizing the agent to sign and file the return or the IRS Form 2848.

The essential element of the special power of attorney is specific language authorizing the signing and filing of the member’s federal income tax return. For married couples filing a joint return, the non-military or non-deploying spouse may sign and file the return on the deployed member’s behalf.

A special power of attorney or IRS Form 2848 is

not required but the spouse filing the return must attach a statement to the return explaining that the member is deployed and not available to sign the return (also list the specific Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area).

However, with a short or no notice deployment, you may want to consider the filing extensions authorized by the IRS for service members deployed to a Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area. Taking advantage of the filing extension allows the member the time and opportunity to file, and to seek assistance in filing a completely accurate return. The extension provisions apply to most tax actions for the period of the deployment, plus 180 days thereafter.

During the extension period, the filing of income tax returns, and assessment and collection deadlines will be extended. Interest and penalties attributable to the extension period will also not be charged (however, the IRS will pay interest on a refund from the due date of the return if the return is timely filed after applying the deadline extension). The extension applies without regard to the source of the income, such as unearned income from investments.

The extension provisions also apply to individuals serving in the Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area in support of U.S. Armed Forces, such as civilian personnel acting under the direc-

tion of the U.S. Armed Forces in support of those forces. In addition, members of the U.S. Armed Forces who perform military service in an area outside the Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area qualify for the extensions if their service is in direct support of military operations in the Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area, and they receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.

This extension applies automatically. Neither deployed members nor their spouses at home need to file an extension request with the IRS in order to take advantage of the filing extension. If the IRS takes any actions or sends a notice of examination before learning that the taxpayer qualifies for a deadline extension, the taxpayer should return the notice with “COMBAT ZONE EXTENSION” written across the top.

Lastly, in the event a member deploys to a location neither in nor in direct support of operations in a Combat Zone or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area, he or she will not be eligible for filing extensions applicable to those areas but would qualify for the June 15 deadline applicable to overseas filers. However, the member would need to file for that extension and will remain bound by the April 15 filing deadline if the deployment is completed before that date.